

IHI JU response to the Independent Observer's report

Call ID: HORIZON-JU-IHI-2026-12-single-stage

IHI JU 12th Call for Proposals – single stage

Dates of evaluation: 8 – 19 June 2026

Name of the Independent Observer: Ian Macdonald HAYES

Summary of Recommendations

This documents contains the replies to the recommendations made by the Independent Observer for the HORIZON-JU-IHI-2026-12-single-stage call.

According to the Independent Observer's general impression, the evaluation process proceeded very smoothly, efficiently and transparently. The consensus evaluation process is considered successful, transparent, fair and in compliance with the highest standard possible based on HE rules.

The Independent Observer (I.O.), in collaboration with the expert evaluators, formulated the following recommendation :

- 1) Currently, the quality check of the CRs is carried out by IHI staff and legal officers. While overall, the workload and the provided time for of the CRs appeared to be appropriate, as indicated by the limited number of suggested changes, a few proposals required more extensive discussion and edits during the cross-readings, which would normally be expected to be flagged earlier during a QC process. The nature of the Call Topic, number of Proposals and the new addition of sub-panels and associated cross-reading, mean that IHI staff have a very high workload across the two weeks. It may be worth considering engaging external independent experts to support the QC process, as is typical in a number of other Horizon Europe Call's.

IHI JU responses to the recommendations

The IHI JU welcomes the IO's findings, which confirm the high overall quality of the evaluation. Furthermore, the IHI office will take the recommendations made into account, to the extent possible:

- 1) While the current internal quality check process has generally proven effective, we acknowledge that a small number of proposals required more substantial revisions during the cross-reading phase. The recommendation to consider external independent experts for quality check, as implemented in some Horizon Europe programmes, is appreciated and will be taken into account when preparing for future calls, subject to available resources and operational considerations.